

Husband:

JOHN ADAMS I

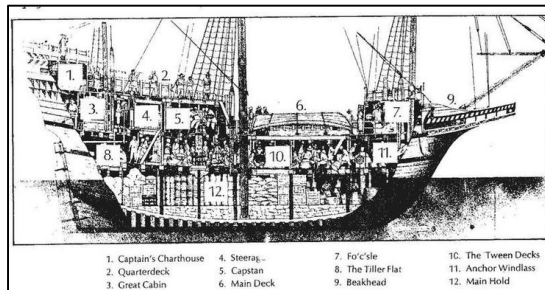
Born: c1600 Yorkshire, England
Married:
Died: <24 October 1633¹ Marshfield, Plymouth Colony
Buried: *Old Winslow Burying Ground*, Marshfield
Father: ADAMS
Mother:

Wife:

ELLEN

Born: 1598
Died: 5 December 1681 Marshfield, Plymouth Colony
Buried: *Old Winslow Burying Ground*, Marshfield
Father:
Mother:

Issue:	Born:	Place:
1. JAMES ADAMS	10 June 1626	Plymouth, Plymouth Colony
2. JOHN ADAMS II	>22 May 1627	Plymouth, Plymouth Colony
3. SUSAN ADAMS		



JOHN ADAMS was a carpenter from Yorkshire or from Wapping, Stephney, Middlesex² who sailed into Plymouth harbor aboard the *Fortune*, it being the second ship financed by the Merchant Adventurers, the underwriter of the colonial venture that saw the *Mayflower* off the year before. The ship dropped anchor at the tip of Cape Cod on 9 November 1621 but, somewhat

inexplicably, lingered there, finally making it to Plymouth harbor several weeks later. Much smaller than the *Mayflower*, the *Fortune* carried 37 colonists, with just 1 woman known to be onboard, bringing the population of the colony to 82 – 66 men and 16 women. It was rather cramped as can be seen on the interior diagram; a full-scale replica has been made. It also brought no provisions for the already hungry colony now faced with the problem of providing lodging in the existing 7 houses and 4 public buildings.

The barren coastline was disheartening which was not improved when the village came into sight. Already facing a harsh and hungry winter, this addition was welcome for the labor it brought but not so much for the added strain on their meager food supplies. This addition of labor was immediately put to good use in building the timber wall surrounding the settlement and the fort (depicted below) between December 1621 and February 1622; the fort was enlarged and strengthened later in that year.



ELLEN NEWTON arrived on the third ship sponsored by the Merchant Adventurers, the *Anne* in 1623. Though not as large as the *Mayflower*, the *Anne* was over twice the size of the *Fortune*.

She carried almost 90 new colonists and arrived 10 July 1623 after a 3-month voyage. Following her was the *Little James*, bringing much needed supplies for the colony. CHARLES BANKS in English Ancestry wrote that ELLEN was already a widow when she sailed from England which explains her being named as MRS. ELLEN NEWTON.³ He continues saying the particulars about her first marriage and her parents are not known. It would be highly unusual for a 25-year-old woman to travel alone and many, including BANKS and myself, believe she travelled with someone, but that remains conjecture at this point. BANKS does point to fellow-passenger BRIDGET LEE, wife of SAMUEL FULLER, as a candidate for sister based on their travelling together and taking up lots next to each other in the colony. BANKS also restates that she is said to be the daughter of PETER WORDEN, SENIOR who died at Yarmouth, Massachusetts in 1638 but warns that this is *given with necessary reservation*. Both are good leads and it has yet to be found out if any more research has been done with these leads.



Both JOHN and ELLEN are counted among the group known as *First Comers* or *Old Comers*. This group, numbering some 189, is made up of the colonists who arrived at Plymouth on the first four ships to the colony – the *Mayflower* in 1620, the *Fortune* in 1621, and the *Anne* and *Little James* in 1623.⁴ JOHN is

noted as an *Old Comer* in a deed dated 1666 which meant that he was one of less than 200 people who came to the colony on the first 4 ships that were sponsored by the Merchant Adventurers – the *Mayflower*, the *Fortune*, the *Anne*, and the *Little John*.

Lands allocated in 1623 included one acre for JOHN ADAMS among the lots *that lye to the sea, eastward* and one acre to ELLEN NEWTON in the group that *goeth in wth a corner by ye ponde*.

JOSEPH PECKE SENIOR, in his Will of 1663, bequeathed to NATHANIEL PECKE all the land he bought from JOHN ADAMS; unclear if this is father or son.⁵

The village pictured above had grown a bit in two years as found in the letter from EMMANUEL ALTHAM, the Captain of the *Little James*, to SIR EDWARD ALTHAM dated September 1623:⁶

I mean the plantation at Patuxet (Plymouth's Indian name). It is well situated upon a high hill close unto the seaside . . . In this plantation is about twenty houses, four or five of which are very fair and pleasant, and the rest (as time will serve) shall be made better. And this town is in such manner that it makes a great street between the houses, and at the upper end of the town there is a strong fort, both by nature and art, with six pieces of reasonable good artillery mounted thereon; in which fort is continual watch . . . This town is paled round about with pale of eight foot long, or thereabouts, and in the pale are three great gates.

He was a member of the 1626 Purchaser investment group. Livestock had been considered common property since the beginning. As the herd increased through births and the supplies brought to the colony, the labor required to maintain the livestock increased and it was decided to divide the stock amongst groups of the same company, presumably made up of people that arrived together yet to also maintain a smaller common stock. The labor required became a divisible quantity as well with each company deciding for themselves if they were going to

provide the labor from within or hire someone to do the labor for them. The cattle division decision reached on 22 May 1627 included:

- The *cattell w^{ch} were the Companies, to wit, the Cowes and the Goates* should be equally divided among the *psonts of the same company* into 12 lots;
- The term to last 10 years, 22 May 1627 to 21 May 1636;
- Everyone required to *sufficiently pvid for there owne pt* or forfeit *the same*;
- The old stock plus half the increase to remain for *comon use* for 10 years and divided at that time or as *ocation falleth out*;
- The other half of the increase from the old stock to be *their owne forever*;
- If any cattle miscarry or were hurt or lost, *indifferent* men will determine if the loss was through negligence and, if so, assign blame if possible and that person to compensate both the *Company, i.e., the village as a whole*, and their own company.

JOHN, *ELINER*, and their son JAMES were part of the 6th lot which fell to JOHN SHAW and his company of 13. Others in their lot besides the 4 already named were JOHN and MARY WINSLOW; WILLIAM and ELIZABETH BASSETT and their children WILLIAM and ELIZABETH JUNIOR; and FRANCIS, ANNA, and MERCY SPRAGE. They received *the lesser of the black Cowes Came at first in the Ann wth which they must keepe the bigest of the 2 steers. Also to this lott was two shee goats. The Calfe of this yeare to come of the black Cow* was given to the company of STEPHEN HAWKINS that, *if a bull*, was to keep it *ungelt* and for common use for 5 years, afterwards for their own use and for their own use otherwise.⁷

How the town continued to grow is shown by the 1628 letter of ISAACK DE RASIERES, a visitor from New Amsterdam, to SAMUEL BLOMMAERT:

New Plymouth lies on the slope of a hill stretching east towards the sea-coast, with a broad street about a cannon shot of 800 feet long, leading down the hill; with a [street] crossing in the middle, northwards to the rivulet and southwards to the land. The houses are constructed of clapboards, with gardens also enclosed behind and at the sides with clapboards, so that their houses and courtyards are arranged in very good order, with a stockade against sudden attack; and at the ends of the streets there are three wooden gates. In the center, on the cross street, stands the Governor's house, before which is a square stockade upon which four patereros (small cannon) are mounted, so as to enfilade the streets. Upon the hill they have a large square house, with a flat roof, built of thick sawn planks stayed with oak beams, upon the top of which they have six cannon, which shoot iron balls of four and five pounds, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sundays and the usual holidays.

JOHN was assessed 9 shillings on 25 March 1633, as his share or part of an annual assessment, payable by the end of November. On 1 July 1633 the responsibility for mowing the grass was apportioned to the residents and JOHN ADAMS and JOHN WINSLOW were charged with mowing that which *MR. GILSON mowed last yeare and the rest adjoyning unmowed*.⁸ JOHN ADAMS is on the first list of Freemen of the colony, drawn up in 1633.⁹ JOHN and ELLEN most likely lived within the confines of the stockade village while tending to their meadows and lands to the north at Green Harbor. While nothing definitive has surfaced as there are no deeds from the first

decade, the tendency was to live in the village and have land outside and it is certain that his son JOHN lived on land near Green Harbor that some have said was the land his father had worked before he died in early 1633.

JOHN ADAMS I died in 1633 and from the lack of a last Will and Testament, we can assume it was unexpected. On the 11th of November, ELLEN, the widow of JOHN, presented an *inventory of the goods and chattels of her late husband JOHN ADAMS, deceased*, made by JOHN WYNSLOW and JOHN JENNY on 24 October, to the Court. The estate was valued at £71.14 of which half of that came from *¾ of a Cow, one heyfer and one cow calfe*; the rest being sundry items such as a feather bed and a small wool bed, 6 *pillowbeers* (cases) but just 2 pillows, 2 *Table cloathes* and 6 *Table napkins*, a green rug, and a *peece* (gun). It was accepted and the Court ordered on that same date, if ELLEN should have *the inclination to marry*, before that ceremony happens, she must *estate*, meaning provide for, each of the three children she had by JOHN to receive £5 sterling when they *come to years of discretion according to the Statutes of England*. ELLEN and JOHN BARNES were bound to make good on all debts and the sums ordered for the children in the amount of £140 and ELLEN was appointed administrator.¹⁰

On 27 March 1634 an assessment on the residents was levied and 9 shillings was apportioned to the *WIDOW ADAMS*, to be paid before the last day of November.¹¹ The Court ordered on 7 December 1641 that there is to be no trees cut down *upon the heads of the lots of the heirs of JOHN ADAMS at Playne Dealeing* until such time that the town takes up enough land to meet their needs.¹²

ELLEN did marry again in June 1634 to KENELM WINSLOW: *KENELM WINSLOW of Marshfield, sometimes inhabitant of the town of Plymouth at the time of his marriage with ELLENOR ADAMS (sometimes wife unto JOHN ADAMS, deceased)* ... KENELM was born 29 April 1599, a *joiner* or cabinet and furniture maker who lived in Marshfield, founded by his brother EDWARD, after arriving ~1632.¹³ He lived on a neck of land between Green Harbor and the South River. His brother EDWARD WINSLOW was the colonial Governor on two separate occasions. ELLEN and KENELM had four children:¹⁴

- KENELM WINSLOW JUNIOR: born 1635; died 11 November 1715.
- ELEANOR WINSLOW: born 1637; married SAMUEL BAKER; died 27 August 1676.
- NATHANIEL WINSLOW: born c1639; died 1 December 1719.
- JOB WINSLOW: born 1641; died 14 July 1720.

KENELM died on 12 September 1672 while visiting Salem and was buried there. In his Will, dated 8 August 1672, he describes himself as *being very sick and drawing nigh unto death*. An inventory for his estate is dated 25 September 1672. ELLEN died in Marshfield at the age of 83. She was buried on 5 December 1681, which gives 1598 as the calculated year of birth. Her gravestone *on Burying hill* has an epitaph for KENELM.¹⁵ Their house, built in 1630, was inherited by their son NATHANIEL and is still standing.



ISSUE:

1. JAMES ADAMS: married FRANCIS VASSELL, daughter of WILLIAM, in neighboring Scituate on 15 July 1646.¹⁶ JAMES's farm was on the Marshfield side of the North River nearly opposite the farm owned by his father-in-law WILLIAM. JAMES and FRANCIS attended the second church in

Scituate and this is where their children were baptized. JAMES acknowledged before the Governor on 10 June 1651 that he had received £5 from KENELM WINSLOW when he came of age. This was entered in the Plymouth Colony records on 26 December 1651.¹⁷ JAMES died at sea *on the good ship James of London* sailing under the command of CAPTAIN JOHN ALLIN on 19 January 1654. His estate was valued at £34.15 and KENELM WINSLOW was granted Letters of Administration.¹⁸ Almost 20 years after JAMES died, his widow FRANCES had 150 acres *laid out to her* by the Massachusetts General Court on 7 May 1673. The land was *about 8 miles north of Lancaster*. They had 5 children:

- a. WILLIAM ADAMS: born 16 May 1647; baptized by MR. WITHERELL on 23 May 1647.
 - b. ANNA ADAMS: born 18 April 1649; baptized 20 May 1649.
 - c. RICHARD ADAMS: born 19 April 1651; baptized 27 April 1651.
 - d. MARY ADAMS: born 27 January 1653; baptized 5 February 1653.
 - e. MARGARET ADAMS: no record of birth; baptized 18 March 1654.
2. **JOHN ADAMS:** married first JANE JAMES in 1654 and second, **ELIZABETH KENT** in 1663. Their story continues in their own file.
 3. SUSAN ADAMS: no information.

¹ Henry Whittemore. History of the Adams Family. (New York: McDonald & Company, 1893) pp. 55 – 56. Digital version available at <https://HathiTrust.org>.

² Charles Edwards Banks. Topographical Dictionary of 2885 English Emigrants to New England 1620 – 1650. (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Company; 1963) p. 113, citing Banks Mss. Digital version at HathiTrust.org.

³ Charles Edward Banks. The English Ancestry and Homes of the Pilgrim Fathers. (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Company; 1962) p. 153. Digital version at HathiTrust.org.

⁴ "The First Comers," Bissell Family History <https://craigwhitmoreparker.wixsite.com/bissell-history/the-first-comers>

⁵ "Nathaniel Pecke of Rehoboth," The Plymouth Colony Archive Project; <http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/Pecke.html>; last accessed 25 February 2019.

⁶ This and the 1628 description are from: Sydney V James. Three Visitors to Early Plymouth: Letters about the Pilgrim Settlement in New England during its first seven years. (Plimoth Plantation, 1963) pp. 24, 76.

⁷ *The Mayflower Descendant*, 1:148 – 151 (Boston; 1899). Digital version available at Archive.org.

⁸ Nathaniel B. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England. Court Orders, Volume 1, 1633 – 1640 (New York: AMS Press; 1968 – a reprint of Boston: William White; 1855) pp. 11, 14. Digital version at Archive.org

⁹ D. Hamilton Hurd. History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts. (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Company; 1884) p. 101. Available at Archive.org.

¹⁰ "John Adams," *New England Historical and Genealogical Record*, 33:410 – 413; digital version at Archive.org. *supra*. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth 1:19. *supra*. *Mayflower Descendant*. 1:147 – 148, refers to 1632 Book of Court Orders, p. 39.

¹¹ *supra*. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth. 1:28.

¹² Nathaniel B. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England. Court Orders, Volume 2, 1641 – 1651 (Boston: William White; 1855) p. 28. Digital version at Archive.org.

¹³ *supra*. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth. Court Orders. 1:30.

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- ¹⁴ "The Winslow Family," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 25:355 (Boston: New England Historic-Genealogical Association; 1871) Available at Archive.org. "Kenelm Winslow (1599 – 1672)," 52 Ancestors Week #1; <https://tellmorestories.wordpress.com/2014/01/06/kenelm-winslow-1599-1672-52-ancestors-week1/>; 22 February 2019.
- ¹⁵ "Brief Memoir of Dr. Winslow Lewis," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 17:7 (Albany: New England Historic-Genealogical Association; 1863) Available at Archive.org.
- ¹⁶ *supra*. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth. Court Orders. 2:108.
- ¹⁷ *supra*. Shurtleff (ed). Records of the Colony of New Plymouth. Court Orders. 2:176.
- ¹⁸ "Abstract of the Earliest Wills," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 4:320 (1850) Available at Archive.org.